

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 008297

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, UR

SUBJECT: BREZHNEV LETTERS TO FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT

REF: STATE 006513 (NOTAL)

1. AS PROMISED IN REFTEL, FRG EMBASSY HAS PROVIDED
DEPARTMENT WITH BREZHNEV LETTERS TO SCHMIDT DATED
DECEMBER 12 AND JANUARY 5. DEPARTMENT UNDERSTANDS FRG
PLANS TO DISCUSS LETTERS IN THE NAC.

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2. IN DECEMBER 12 LETTER BREZHNEV NOTES CONSIDERABLE
PROGRESS IN RECENT YEARS IN THE PROCESS OF DETENTE,
ESPECIALLY IN EUROPE, BUT POINTS OUT THAT MANY ACUTE
PROBLEMS STILL AWAIT SOLUTION, THE MOST PRESSING OF WHICH
IS TO REACH AGREEMENT ON RADICAL MEASURES TO CHECK THE
ARMS RACE, ESPECIALLY IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS. LETTER TAKES
NOTE OF "INCREASING EFFORTS TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT FOR

DEPLOYMENT OF NEUTRON BOMB ON TERRITORIES OF THE EUROPEAN MEMBERS OF NATO, PLANS WHICH HAVE A "DANGEROUS" AND CALAMITOUS SIGNIFICANCE". BREZHNEV STATES THAT WHILE FRG THUS FAR APPEARS TO BE SHOWING RESERVE, "WHETHER THE NEUTRON BOMB WILL COME TO BE BASED IN EUROPE DEPENDS IN MANY RESPECTS ON POSITION ULTIMATELY TAKEN BY FRG. BREZHNEV CONTINUES THAT EUROPE FACES CHOICE OF CONTINUING ALONG

PATH OF DETENTE OR OF INCREASING INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS, BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL,"WITH ALL THE CONSEQUENCES." FINALLY, LETTER NOTES THAT SOVIETS WOULD "TAKE CORRESPONDING MEASURES IN THE MILITARY FIELD" IN RESPONSE TO DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STRATEGIC WEAPONS, AND POINTS OUT THAT, WHILE SUCH A PERSPECTIVE MAY BE OF LITTLE CONCERN OVERSEAS, THE GERMANS AND RUSSIANS LIVE UNDER "ONE EUROPEAN ROOF." BREZHNEV ADDED THAT HE WAS SENDING SIMILAR MESSAGES TO PRESIDENT GISCARD, PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN, AND PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI.

3. JANUARY 5 LETTER TO SCHMIDT STATES IT IS NO SECRET THAT USG CONTINUED TO PUSH FOR APPROVAL OF NEUTRON BOMB DEPLOYMENT DURING DECEMBER NATO MINISTERIAL WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, AND THAT, DESPITE DOUBTS AND OPPOSING VIEWS AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL, MILITARY SUPPORTERS--INCLUDING SOME BUNDESWEHR GENERALS--ARE ALREADY QUITE VOCAL SUPPORTERS OF THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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"BARBARIC" MASS DESTRUCTION WEAPON." BREZHNEV EMPHASIZES THAT IF THE NEUTRON WEAPON IS PRODUCED IN THE WEST, "THEN THE USSR WILL BE FORCED TO ANSWER SUCH A CHALLENGE." BREZHNEV THEREFORE PROPOSES MUTUAL RENUNCIATION ON PRODUCTION OF THE ER WEAPON, AND CLAIMS THAT THE USSR IS READY-NOW TO BEGIN PRACTICAL DISCUSSION OF HIS PROPOSAL WITH THE WEST. FYI BREZHNEV HINTED AT BEGINNING OF LETTER THAT USSR WAS MAKING SIMILAR APPROACHES TO A NUMBER OF THE OTHER CSCE PARTICIPANTS. END FYI. CHRISTOPHER

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